

**MINUTES  
CITY OF BLOOMINGTON  
COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY**

Tuesday, December 11, 2007, 6:00 p.m.  
McCloskey Room, City Hall, 401 North Morton Street

**Roll Call:**

Members Present: Steve Ashkin, Bob Bent, John Hamilton, Cairril Mills, Catherine Stafford, Toby Strout, John West

Regrets: Christine Glaser, Jeff Mease, Dave Rollo, George Huntington

Staff Present: Adam Wason, Assistant Economic Development Director of Small Business and Sustainable Development

**Call to Order/Approval of Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. The November meeting minutes were approved unanimously with several noted corrections.

**Public Comment:**

Paul Schneller asked that BCOS consider sponsorship of a community wide forum of stakeholders for Green Building. He stated that a more comprehensive Green Building Ordinance including non-municipal buildings would be appropriate and that in order to have community wide buy-in the forums must take into account the costs and benefits of Green Building. Paul suggested involving all local stakeholders in the community such as builders, architects, realtors, developers and government officials. Paul noted the importance of this buy-in and dialogue regarding the community benefit of Green Building and the pros and cons of such construction.

Milo Rose commented that Caldwell EcoCenter and Center for Sustainability is establishing an EcoMedia Center collection of resources regarding sustainability. Milo also noted that the Caldwell Center will be the first downtown building to have a small array of Photovoltaic Solar Panels with assistance from the Indiana Office of Defense and Energy Development.

Mike Biggs questioned whether or not the City could have an ordinance that required all new buildings within the city to be resource neutral. He stated that he had heard of a city that had a few of these resource neutral buildings. Mike stated that once one of these buildings is built all other new buildings will have an example to follow. He also mentioned that the proposed rate increase by City Utilities could be offset by this type of new construction that is resource neutral. Mike also requested that agenda documents posted to the City Website be in forms other than just PDF.

Toby made a point of order to the appropriateness of the public comment conversations that take up a good portion of time each meeting. Cairril noted the by-laws state the public comment is for a total of 5-minutes and limits individual comments to 2-minutes

### **Announcements**

Toby Strout requested that BCOS members present state their intentions of continued service on the commission. Cairril Mills, Catherine Stafford, and John West informed the commission of their intentions to discontinue service to BCOS. The commission expressed their gratitude to the time committed to BCOS and the volunteer efforts of all three.

### **Project Proposals for 2008**

Adam Wason spoke of Mayor Kruzan's request for project proposals in need of funding for 2008. Examples given for possible projects include greenhouse gas emission reductions, business outreach on sustainability, to social equity and economic development projects.

Toby asked if the previous project proposals that required impacts in all three- E's would be revisited. John Hamilton noted that this is simply an invitation for specific projects to pursue and that funding is available for any number of BCOS initiatives.

John Hamilton and Toby noted that this is good news.

### **Discussion of Officer Election Process**

John noted the number of vacancies that are upcoming and requested that all BCOS members consider individuals that would be a good fit for the commission. It was suggested that recommendations be made to either Mayor Kruzan directly or through Adam Wason.

John H. noted that possible formal action on the officer election process be looked into for January. John felt it to be beneficial for the entire commission that the election of new officers take place after appointments are made to fill all seats on the commission. It was requested that staff look into the wording of the bylaws in regards to the process of officer elections.

### **Chairs Report**

John referred to a very successful environmental program called the Toxic Release Inventory that dramatically reduced toxins released by the private sector due to an informational campaign that took place in the 1970's that required the reporting of toxins released into the environment. The sole fact that this information gathering and reporting was public information, company's took the initiative to reduce due to the ramifications of this being public knowledge.

John stated that in this regard it may be beneficial for the commission to look at ways in which the public can make progress by simply being informed. John spoke about how he assumes that the general public when looking at the amount of utilities personally consumed would not know if the amounts consumed were above or below average for similarly sized households. John thought that it would be greatly beneficial in terms of energy and water consumption if customers were easily able to get information on their

usage compared to average uses of similar sized households. Discussion took place regarding both the benefits and limitation of such a program. This could possibly place a very heavy burden on the utility company's in terms of added processes and reporting.

John also spoke about the expansion of the Monroe Water Treatment Plant and posed the question of whether or not demand-side controls had been looked into in order to determine the relevant expansion needs if conservation efforts are made.

This discussion also brought up some questions as to the fundamental purpose of the commission and if BCOS is falling behind in their efforts to focus resources of the commission on projects that fit into the mission. Catherine said that this relates to many of her frustrations with the function of the commission and has much to do with her desire to not return to the commission after her current term is up.

Toby said something to the extent of not wanting John's comments to not be considered...Blah Blah Blah.

Catherine continued that the fundamental function of the commission is not being met because members work on separate areas that are not coordinated within the overall mission of the commission.

Bob spoke of the difference in academia where faculty is encouraged to work on their passions and be assisted by the commission in doing so. Commission members discussed this concept for some time with several varying points of view.

### **Staff Report**

Adam Wason reported on the Environmental Commissions progress with their Green Building Program. The EC presented to City Council on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007 with regards to the proposed ordinance language, the newly created website at [www.bloomington.in.gov/greenbuild](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/greenbuild).

Adam also spoke about recent Team Green accomplishments including a LED bulb replacement program for City maintained traffic signals, the installation of LEED certified carpeting in the Public Works office and the recycling of the carpet being replaced. Adam also spoke of discussions taking place regarding a fleet of bicycles being available to City Employees for errands. Adam also mentioned that the Monroe County Solid Waste Management district has provided another battery recycling container for City Hall.

Adam stated that he has tried working with commission members on the access issues to the Yahoo Groups site. Members said that they are still having issues, and the BCOS may return to simple email correspondence.

Adam finished by stating that his Leadership Bloomington Monroe County group project is going to be an assistance project with the Habitat for Humanity Restore relocation efforts.

### **Committee Reports**

Sustainability Assessment Report: Toby stated that commission members should all be on committees. Since the last BCOS meeting the SAR committee met twice and the meetings have gone well. Toby feels our progress on the report is somewhat stifled due to a lack of overall direction on what the committee should be doing. Toby feels that the composition of the committee may need to be reevaluated. Toby struggles with the indicators not overlapping into the three E's. The committee has not been able to identify a significant purpose without looking into the process of visioning and determining what a sustainable community is.

Toby also responded that youth development was something she was interested in. The hope was that targets would come from this process of evaluating youth development programs and policies within the community. She also spoke of the need to look at indicators related to the basic needs of individuals.

John Hamilton spoke to the fact that we should assess where we are with the individual indicators and this normally reflects what we care about. John spoke of the process involved in the initial assessment report. The goal was not to duplicate data collection that other boards and commissions are doing and it came down to logistics of producing indicators for a reasonable set of indicators.

John West spoke to the fact that the process involved in the first report and the fact that it has been approved by the commission, that we cannot scrap the indicators in the first report. John felt that the initial report needs to be used as a basis for future reports. Amending, updating, and tweaking the indicators in the initial report to provide more meaningful information would be a step in the right direction.

Cairril stated that two things need to be considered in future reports. Deficiencies in the first report can be clarified and to be considered in the realm of the 3 E's. The next decision is to find out areas where the report can be expanded in meaningful ways.

Bob Bent spoke to the desires and interests of the individual committee members and that the report should reflect the interests of the committee members. John West disagreed and stated that the report should reflect the needs of the community in terms of indicators and then to base our initiatives on what the assessment report finds to be areas in need of improvement.

Discussion continued as to the role of the SAR committee and that by creating the report BCOS should use it as a guiding tool.

Steve Ashkin sincerely apologized for his tardiness and stated that the commission should look to other individuals in the community with expertise in the specific areas of the indicators. He stated that the indicators report should be separate from the initiatives undertaken by the commission. Separating the indicators report from how we measure progress is essential.

John agreed with several of Steve's points in regards to the how the SAR relates to our targets and initiatives. John stated that he thought that personal interests and the accomplishments of the individual members are not mutually exclusive.

Cairril spoke about the Monroe County Public Library and the "Sustainability Collection" that she was trying to assist in building. She has created a long list of sustainability books, DVDs and other resources. Disconnect took place between the library and BCOS as to what a "collection" is for the library. To MCPL the collection would be a comprehensive catalogue not just a display. Cairril will provide this listing to BCOS before her departure.

Education Committee: Bob Bent discussed the educational outreach events that the joint EC/BCOS committee has been sponsoring on energy efficiency. The next event is on Wednesday December 12, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at MCPL. Bob also spoke to the desire of holding discussions not just on individual topics but by holding a thematic series of discussions on a specific topic. Steve asked if we have a strategy to collect information by asking for a commitment from forum attendees as to what they have actually done as a result of the forum discussion.

John West stated his support for Paul Schneller's idea to hold a collaborative event with stakeholders regarding Green Building. To John, collaboration is essential and that by getting the key players involved in a discussion or symposium it will not be as threatening. John stated that he was confused as to the term dates, and announced that he will be attending the January meeting as his last.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.